

Filed for intro on 06/25/2001

HOUSE RESOLUTION 166  
By Ferguson

A RESOLUTION To recognize the contributions of the members  
and pastors of South Harriman Baptist Church.

WHEREAS, The members of this legislative body are pleased to recognize those local churches which throughout their existence have contributed so much to the spiritual health of their congregations and to the wellbeing of their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, The members of South Harriman Baptist Church comprise one such vital and active community of faith; for nearly 94 years they have devoted their collective and individual resources wholeheartedly to the service of God and humanity; and

WHEREAS, On September 9, 1907, twenty people met under a tent near the present location of Bowers Elementary School for the purpose of organizing a Baptist church; the Reverend J. W. Whaley was elected as Moderator and Thomas R. Scott was elected Clerk; and

WHEREAS, The Reverend Whaley called the meeting to order, and the Articles of Baptist Faith were read and approved; the Church Covenant was then read and approved and those assembled were declared by the Reverend Whaley to be South Harriman Baptist Church; and

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WHEREAS, Although the charter members continued to meet under the tent for several months, a building committee was soon formed and a permanent structure was completed in 1908; a bell that had been purchased by Thomas and Lodena Scott was first rung on April 26, 1908 to summon the congregation to worship, at first only on the first and third Saturdays of each month, but later on every Sunday; and

WHEREAS, The first pastor of South Harriman was J.H. Wireick and the first Sunday School Superintendent was Thomas Scott; Mr. Scott, an excellent carpenter, made the church's first pew, which is still on display; and

WHEREAS, During its almost 94 years of existence, South Harriman Baptist Church has been led by 20 pastors, 4 interim pastors and 92 deacons; the Reverend Edsel West served as Pastor for the longest period, from 1978 to January 2000, and the longest serving staff member was Patsy Oran McGill, who was Church Secretary for more than 30 years; and

WHEREAS, Miss Mary Alice Mize was the first paid Music Minister, and George Wadlington served as Music Minister for 15 years; Mr. Wadlington is a charter member of the nationally known "Centurymen", whose travels across this country and the world have included concerts in China, Russia and Brazil; and

WHEREAS, The commitment of the members of South Harriman Baptist Church to serving their community is exemplified by the "Sunshine Sisters," a group of ladies who performed great works for the sick and needy in the Harriman community; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, the ministries of South Harriman Baptist Church have grown and prospered, and now the physical plant includes a sanctuary, educational building, and a family life center serving a congregation of 1,420 resident and non-resident members; and

WHEREAS, This year the original church bell donated by the Scott family has been refurbished by the Harriman Tennessee Technology Center's Machine Tools Class; Instructor

Lynn Swafford has led the class in a project to construct a bell tower for the newly refurbished church bell, which will be dedicated on July 14, 2001; and

WHEREAS, The congregation and Pastor of South Harriman Baptist Church actively and faithfully continue the work to which their Creator has called them, as did those members who have gone before them; they continue to look back to their past with gratitude for God's saving grace and to the future with confidence of God's continuing strengthening presence as they continue the work of the Kingdom; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we hereby honor the pastors and members, both living and dead, who constitute the community of faith known as South Harriman Baptist Church, for their steadfast commitment to serving God and their community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we offer our best wishes for many more years of faithful worship, fellowship and Christian service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.